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THE

MEDIÆVAL TILES

IN

ST. MARY'S CHURCH, MONMOUTH.

BY

H. G. GRIFFINHOOFE.

MONMOUTH:
R. WAUGH AND SON.

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PREFACE.

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DURING a visit to Monmouth in 1894 I made some notes respecting the Mediæval Tiles in the Parish Church. Those notes have been re-written, as it was hinted to me that they may be of service to other visitors when staying in the historic town. I trust such may be the case, and that what is set down in the following pages possesses sufficient merit to warrant its appearance in print. I have, of course, availed myself of authorities within reach—especially the valuable papers on "The Mediæval Tiles of the Priory Church of Great Malvern," by the Rev. Alfred S. Porter, M.A., F.S.A., which appeared in *The Antiquary*, vol. xxi.—and for the help thus afforded I beg to acknowledge my indebtedness.

H. G. G.

34, *St. Petersburg Place, W.*
St. Crispin's Day, 1894.

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THE MEDIÆVAL TILES

IN

ST. MARY'S CHURCH,

MONMOUTH.

NCE upon a time fair hill-surrounded Monmouth possessed a beautiful parish church which was built at different dates.* At its east end stood "the Monkes Church." In 1736 local vandals swept away every vestige of those ancient fanes except the tower with its fine west window and doorway and its graceful tapering spire. They blocked up the lofty arch which opened into the nave of the parish church, and erected a building of an ugly style of Tuscan architecture, "without," says Mr. Waugh, "a single ecclesiastical excellence to redeem it." They filled it with galleries and pews—in short, the building might be described as "a nest of boxes." Thus the church remained until 1881-82, when the present one was built from designs by the late Mr. G. E. Street, R.A.

At that time some excavations had to be made, when, among relics of the older churches, various encaustic tiles and fragments of tiles were unearthed. They were collected and

* Waugh's "Guide to Monmouth."

placed within the tower, which once more is open to the body of the church, and were arranged in a course about four feet above the present pavement, on the south, west, and north walls, where, it is hoped, they are safe from any further rough treatment.

The tiles are particularly interesting, and in several examples show to what perfection the tile maker's art was brought in the fifteenth century. Many are curious; some display fine blazonry; most of them are artistic in their designs, and the greater number are of good workmanship, though here and there a suspicion is raised that a faulty specimen was issued from the tileries

On comparatively few of the whole tiles has the glaze remained. This is accounted for by their having been used for paving the floor, and by the soft nature of the glaze, which was a compound of lead and silex. Where it has not perished it is of a soft yellow tint. It is seen best on the tiles intended for, and probably used in the old church as mural decorations, or on those that have escaped the tread of many feet.

The process of manufacture supposed to have been generally employed in constructing these and similar tiles has been described by several writers. The following quotation is from Mr. Henry Shaw's "Specimens of Tile Pavements," published in 1858:—

"Squares of well-compacted clay, usually from four to six inches, with a thickness of one inch, were dried, probably in the sun, to the requisite degree of hardness, having a stamp impressed upon them, which bore a design in relief, so as to leave the ornamental pattern in cavetto. Into the hollows thus left on the face of the tile, clay of another colour, most commonly white, or pipe clay, was then inlaid or impressed."

It may be as well to note here, that others who have made a study of mediæval tiles since Mr. Shaw's time are of opinion that after the design was impressed, the face of the *whole* tile was covered with the lighter coloured clay, which, after being allowed to dry, was subjected to a process of scraping until the "quarrel" (to use the technical term) exhibited the pattern formed in the cavetto.

"The tile" (to continue the quotation) "thus prepared was then faced with a metallic glaze, which gave to the white clay a yellow tinge, and a more rich and pleasing tint to the rest.

For the success of this simple operation it was necessary that the two kinds of clay employed should be, as nearly as possible, of the same quality, for if in the furnace the white was liable to shrink more than the red, the work would be full of cracks; in the other case, the design would bulge and be thrown upwards: of which imperfections examples are not wanting."

It is doubtful whether the tiles were burnt in the clay state and glazed at the same firing, or whether they were burnt first and glazed afterwards.

Many of these tiles at Monmouth were undoubtedly supplied from the tilery belonging to the Priory at Malvern, and there is every reason to believe they are all of English make. As a rule, the tiles found in our churches were the work of tileries belonging to some of our great religious houses. But occasionally they were obtained from abroad. For instance, there are in the South Kensington Museum some thirteenth century tiles—a set of four—which came out of Edmonton Church. They are Flemish, and bear a rosette pattern and circle, with Flemish inscription. But perhaps a still more interesting case of foreign tiles being found in an English church—they were made much about the same time as some of these at Monmouth—occurs at Witham, in Essex. Fixed in a wall of the vestry of S. Nicholas Church is an encaustic tile, with fragments of three others of the same pattern. They bear the arms of a Duke of Burgundy, subsequent to the acquisition of the territories of Brabant and Lembourg. This union was effected by Philip, Duke of Burgundy, in 1430, in which year also he instituted the order of the Golden Fleece. On these tiles the badge of the Golden Fleece is represented pendant below the escutcheon of arms. They are supposed to have been placed in the church by Sir John Montgomery, who lived at Faulkbourne Hall, near Witham. He was in the service of the Duke of Bedford, whom Henry V. made Regent of France; and at one time he was actually in the service of Philip, Duke of Burgundy, and commanded a body of English troops under him at the siege of Compeigne, where Joan of Arc, the Maid of Orleans, was taken by the Burgundians. It has been suggested that in order to do honour to, and commemorate the duke he had served under, Sir John may have brought the tiles home with him, and given

them to adorn the pavement of Witham Church:* a speculation that is plausible, and, perhaps, better than most guesses. And this mention of foreign heraldic tiles leads me to say a word or two about English ones.

It is often assumed that where tiles with armorial bearings are found, they are a proof that the owners of the coats or badges displayed thereon were benefactors to the church. The assumption is not a safe one. The tiles were made originally for some particular building—a chapel, a church, a cathedral, or a private residence—but they were supplied to others in the neighbourhood of, and sometimes at considerable distances from the tilery, if their decorative effect was good. This was especially the case with such arms as those of the king, great nobles like Warren, Clare, Beauchamp, and others. Another thing respecting the armorial bearings is, that though they may assist in fixing the date of a tile, there are examples that are worse than useless for such a purpose; they are deceptive, certain well-known popular patterns having been repeated from generation to generation. Speaking generally, the heraldic tiles were well designed, and exhibit considerable skill in the way the spaces outside the shields were ornamented with geometrical patterns, foliage, etc.†

Occasionally the draughtsman, from want of thought, has come to grief over his work, and the effect is curious. He has drawn the arms correctly on the wooden block, but has not reversed them as he ought to have done, the result being that when the carved mould was pressed into the clay for forming the tile, the whole shield was contournée. Tiles with this peculiarity about them have been found in several places.

The Notes now offered are an attempt to give some particulars concerning the tiles at Monmouth in the order in which they are placed—

1. A single tile: the most important in the collection: badly placed on its side. It presents an heraldic achievement, with helm set in profile and mantling, and the inscription

* *Cf.* the paper by Lieut.-Col. W. J. Ducas on "Witham" in Trans. Essex Archl. Socy. (new series), vol. iv. p. 110.

† There is a great sameness about the foliage on the Malvern tiles. It is nearly always stiff and flat. It resembles some fern conventionally treated, and has none of the variety and graceFulness of the foliage on the Derbyshire tiles.

round the margin: *Orate p. animabus ÷ Thome Coke e* (et) *Alicie uxoris sue. f.f.r.* The armorial bearing:—on a shield *couché, three castles*, 2, 1. The crest:—*on a wreath jewelled, a griffin stantant with wings overt.* The mantling is particularly graceful. Date, about 1450. Size, 8 by 6 inches. There is a similar tile, "from Monmouth Priory," in the British Museum. It is figured in "English Earthenware," by Professor Church, and is given, in colours, in "Specimens of Tile Pavements," by Henry Shaw, F.S.A.

2. A single tile. In the centre, four pellets touching each other, grouped to form a square ornament in the middle of a quatrefoil, which is surrounded by an octofoil, four cusps of which join the quatrefoil: the other four cusps are tipped with fleurs-de-lis. Towards each corner of the tile, filling up the space, is a fleur-de-lis issuing from between two leaves of the octofoil. Size, 6 inches square.

3. A very interesting tile, of which a fragment of such another was found in the kiln, belonging to the Priory at Great Malvern, when brought to light by the late Mr. Harvey Eginton, of Worcester, in 1833. There is an example of this tile affixed to one of the pillars of the nave of the Priory Church. Of the tile Mr. Porter has written—

"It is one of those remarkable instances which show how deep-rooted the distrust of executors was in the middle ages. Its inscription runs thus—

> "Thenke mon thi liffe
> Mai not ēū endure,
> That thou dost thiself
> of that thou art sure
> but that thou kepist
> unto thi sectur cure
> and ēū hit availe thee
> hit is but aventure."

For a parallel to this we may turn to Weever's "Funerall Monuments," where he speaks of executors as "interring both the honour and memory of the defunct together with his corps, perfidiously forgetting their fidelity to the deceased, of which it will please you reade this old inscription depicted upon a wall within S. Edmund's Church in Lumbard Street, London—

*

'Man, the behovyth oft to haue this in mind
That thow geueth with thin hand, that sall thow fynd
For widowes be sloful and chyldren beth unkynd
Executors beth covetos, and kep all as they fynd.
If eny body esk wher' the deddys goodys becam
. They answer
So GOD me help and halidam, he died a poor man
Think
on this. ' "

Only the upper part of the Monmouth tile is legible.

4. One of a set of four. Placed diagonally, a shield of the Royal Arms (Henry V.), bearing quarterly 1 and 4 *France modern*, 2 and 3 *England*. In the upper corner of the tile are fern leaves.

5. One of a set of four, made at Malvern for the tomb of Sir Walter Scull in the church of Holt, Worcestershire. When complete the legend reads: "Miserimini : mei : miserimini :" mei saltem. vos. amici. mei. quia : manus : Dni. tetigit : me. (*Have pity upon me, have pity upon me at least, ye my friends ; for the hand of God hath touched me.*"—Job xix. 21). At the corners are the names of the Evangelists—Marc: Mathe : Lucas : Johe. ; beneath them, within a band, is the date of the tile, viz., A : D : M CCCCLVI., and within the angle of the band is the sacred monogram and foliage. The British Museum possesses a similar tile, measuring five and a-quarter inches square, which was found in the ruins of Bayham Abbey, Sussex.

The reason for the presence on the tile of the words "Marc. Mathe. Lucas. Johe." appears at first somewhat puzzling, but when it is remembered that in days of yore the repetition of those names was supposed to act as a charm, and as such were repeated in the rhyme—

"Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John,
The bed be blest that I lie on,"

to keep away all evil from the living during the hours of "death's counterfeit" and also how that in the Middle Ages the terrors of the grave were exaggerated, then it will be understood why the four names were placed as a protection on what was intended to cover some narrow bed prepared for the last long rest.

With the names emblematically treated thereon, vestiges of a more costly covering for the dead than this tile have existed in St. Alban's Abbey in our own day.* In the retro-choir or sanctuary "are the almost brassless remains of what has once been a handsome design. The matrix exhibits the figure of an abbot wearing the mitre and holding the pastoral staff, with the rexillum attached. Some portion still remains of the border inscription, taken from Job xix. 25, and having between each word some strange device. The evangelistic emblem of St. Luke still remains in one of the angles, besides an inscription at foot—

"' Hic quidam terra tegitur, peccati solvens debitum,
Cui nomen non imponitur, in libro vitæ sit conscriptum.'

(*One is here covered with earth paying the debt of sin, whose name is not placed on this record. May it be written in the Book of Life*)."† Mr. Herbert Haines was of opinion that the brass was the memorial of John de la Moote, 31st Abbot of S. Alban's who "died on the morrow of St. Simon and St. Jude," A.D. 1400.

6 and 7. Alike: the only instance in St. Mary's of similar tiles being placed side by side; glaze quite worn away. Pattern: Flowing tracery, the spaces filled with conventional cinque-foil roses and stiff foliage.

8. A tile of repeating pattern. The sacred monogram, "I. H. C.," crowned within two circles, surrounded by eight double semi-circles, which, with other tiles formed quatre-foils at the corners. A fragment of one of these repeating tiles is next to the west door on the south side, but the centre is missing. What does remain appears to have contained a shield; in that case the arms may have been those of St. Edward—such an arrangement of the pattern having been

* Of course more important examples could be given of the evangelistic emblems on tombs. For instance, they occur, each labelled with its appropriate name, surrounding a representation of the persons of the Holy Trinity, on the canopy over the tomb of Edward the Black Prince, in Canterbury Cathedral. The St. Alban's example has been selected in preference to others on account of its date and its inscription.

† *Vide* "The Abbey of St. Albans," by the late Rev. H. J. B. Nicholson, D.D., F.S.A., 8th edition, 1887.

met with elsewhere—the tiles when in position, showing the monogram and a shield placed alternately. But if the complimentary tile to No. 8 was only the same design repeated, then probably it formed part of a border to groups of others of

perfectly different patterns, as in Abbot Sebrok's pavement at Gloucester. It was a very favourite design, and with slight variations has been found in London and many other places.

9. One of a set of four presenting a portcullis placed diagonally, with chains pendant thereto; the badge of the houses of Beaufort and Tudor. Henry VII. sometimes added to it the words, *Altera Securitas*, intimating that as the portcullis was an additional defence to a fortress, so his claim to the crown through the blood of Beaufort should not be rejected, although he possessed it by more sufficient and undeniable rights.

It is fortunate that this handsome tile has been recovered and once more occupies a place among those bearing heraldic devices. Not only is it a fine specimen of tile work, but it may, with some degree of certainty, be considered as a record of some benefaction of the Beaufort family.

10. A single tile: very dark in colour: the only one, except a fragment of the same design, that is covered with a green glaze. It is of early date, and with No. 12 is one of the two oldest in the church bearing an heraldic device. Pattern :—

A griffin passant guardant contournée, within a circle, from the outer edge of which stiff fleurs-de-lis are worked to fill the corners of the tile. An example of the edge similarly treated occurs on a tile of the thirteenth or fourteenth century, found at Lewes Priory, Sussex.

11. One of a set of nine. Pattern:—Fern leaves and part of two circles, between which are two shields; the one displaying what is intended to represent *a cross patonce and five martlets*, the so-called arms of S. Edward the Confessor—"they were long regarded with peculiar reverence"; the other, *a sword in pale and two keys in saltire* (emblems of S. Paul and S. Peter), the arms of the See of Exeter. The wards of the keys here are inverted. This set of nine is found in Abbot Sebrok's pavement.

Richard II. impaled the arms of the Confessor with his own armorial bearings. The following extract from "Froissart" (Edit. Pynson, vol. ii., fol. 258), although differing essentially in the arms usually assigned to St. Edward, and containing the most palpable anachronisms in the account of that holy personage, is curious, from its giving to us the opinion entertained at the time of the cause of their assumption by King Richard:—

"Of olde tyme there was a Kynge in Englãde, named Edwarde, who is a saynt and canonised, and honoured through all this realme. In his tyme he subdued the Danes, and disconfited them by batayle on the see thre times. And this Saint Edwarde, Kynge of Englande, Lorde of Ireland and of Acquitaine, the Yrishmen loved and dredde him muche more, than any other Kynge of Englande that had been before. And therefore our Soverayne lorde Kynge Rychard this yere past, whan he was in Irelande, in all his armories and devices, he left the bering of the armes of England, as the lybardes and flour delyces quarterly, and bare the armes of this Saint Edwarde, that is a crosse patent golde and goules with four white martenettes in the felde; wherof it was sayd, the Yrishmen were well pleased, and the soner they enclyned to hym."

12. A single tile: the only one of the pattern. *A lion passant guardant*, surrounded by a circle, the outer edge of which is worked into fern leaves to fill up the corners. (Compare it with No. 10.) In the Museum of Practical Geology, Jermyn Street, is a tile of the end of the thirteenth century, from the kiln at Droitwich. The design, though coarser than this Monmouth lion, bears such a strong resemblance to it, and, in

the edge of the circle, to No. 10, that to attribute both to the Droitwich kiln is not unreasonable.

13. One of a set of four: glaze well preserved: the handsomest of any of the tiles with an M upon it: made at Malvern. Pattern:—A large M—(for the Blessed Virgin)—crowned within part of a circular band: fern leaves filling up corner.

14. The same as No. 2.

15. One of a set of four. It is of the Tintern type. Pattern: One limb of a floriated cross placed diagonally.

16. Same as No. 3: a much worn specimen, broken across the last words of the inscription.

17. One of a repeating design. Pattern:—In the centre a a small ornament, towards which, from opposite corners of the tile, point the limbs of floriated crosses: the other corners, each within one-quarter of double circles, are left plain.

18. A single tile. Pattern:—Radiating towards each corner an open fleur-de-lis: the four stems so joined as to form an ornate circle, enclosing the undecorated centre of the tile. The design is similar to one of the thirteenth century in the Chapter House at Salisbury.

19. One of the twelve border tiles of a set of sixteen. The inner four were decorated with flowing tracery and foliage: the four corner ones having the arms of S. Edward placed diagonally with the base of each shield pointing towards the centre of the group. Pattern, as here shown:—Part of a band of four circles; between the second and third circle is a chain which has cinque-foil roses within the links, and stiff foliage filling the spaces between each link. Below this band, *i.e.*, within the inner circle of the pattern when complete, is a fir-cone. Date, 1445. The band somewhat resembles the pattern on a tile of earlier date found under S. Matthew's Church, Friday Street, London.

20. Same as No. 15, against which it might have been placed to show the design to better advantage.

21. Same as No. 17.

22. A fragment. Pattern:—Crowned M. There is a whole tile of similar design inserted in the course on the north wall. It is under the Amphlett monument.

23. A fragment showing canopy work.

24. One of a set of four. Pattern:—Interlacing circles and stiff foliage.

25. Same as No. 18. Broken.

26. A fragment of a rare tile. The words, *Honorem Deo* ..... are legible. They are part of the legend, "Mentem sanctam. Spontaneum. Honorem. Deo. et Patriæ. Liberacionem." (*A holy mind, honour freely rendered to God, and liberty to the country.*) The tile undoubtedly was sent from Malvern to Monmouth as a charm against fire. The origin of the words is found in the legends concerning Saint Agatha, Virgin and Martyr, who died A.D. 253. In the Calendar she is commemorated on Feb. 5. She was a virgin, honourably born in Sicily: the honour of her birthplace is disputed between the cities of Catanea and Palermo. She suffered martyrdom at Catanea, by order of Quintianus, governor of the province under the Emperor Decius, because she would neither yield to his proposals nor abjure her Christian faith. In art she is sometimes represented carrying a book in her left hand, and as a martyr frequently bears a palm branch; more rarely she has a pan of coals by her side, in reference to the torture she underwent of being rolled over burning coals.*

"At her funeral a strange youth, accompanied by a hundred others, all vested in albs, appeared, and placed upon her breast a tablet bearing the words just quoted. In process of time the relics of the martyr began to work miracles, and her veil was carried in procession to check an eruption of Etna in somewhat the same way that the relics of S. Januarius were used to mollify Vesuvius. History does not record what

* The above account of S. Agatha is abridged from "The Calendar of the Anglican Church," published by John Henry Parker, Oxford and London, 1851. For a fuller list of the emblems associated with S. Agatha, consult "Emblems of Saints in Works of Art," by the Rev. F. C. Husenbeth. London: Burns & Lambert, 1850.

success the intervention met with,* but the fact remains, that through the Middle Ages these words were held to be an effective charm against fire, and the inscription is frequently found; the best known case being that these words were on the great bell at Kenilworth, which was given by Thomas de Kyderminster in 1402."†

In the following quotation from Brand's "Popular Antiquities," reference is evidently made to the words, "Mentem sanctam," etc. :—

"In that rare work, entitled 'The Burnynge of St. Paule's Church in London,' 1561, 8vo. 1563, b., we read: 'They be superstitious that put holinesse in *S. Agathe's Letters*, for burninge houses, thorne bushes for lightnings, etc." Also, signat G l, a, we find, "Charmes, as S. Agathe's Letters, for burning of houses."

Besides its virtue as a charm against fire, this particular tile may have been sent to Monmouth—I do not say it was—for other reasons also. S. Agatha presides over rivers and over valleys. Is the suggestion extravagant that the legend of the saint may have been considered appropriate to place in the infirmary of the Priory that stood in the valley of the Wye?

27. A fragment inverted: part of a tile similar to No. 13.

28. A single tile. Pattern :—The same as No. 8, but much worn.

29. A fragment; see No. 10. Here the unfortunate griffin has not only had his wings clipped, but suffers the additional indignity of being made to stand on his head!

30. A fragment. Date, the first half of the fifteenth century. Pattern: The Stafford knot, surrounding the nave of a wheel.

* It is stated that when the veil was carried outside Catanea, the course of the flowing lava was turned from the city, and in consequence of the miracle all the inhabitants embraced Christianity.

† See "The Mediæval Tiles of Great Malvern Priory Church," by the Rev. Alfred S. Porter, M.A., F.S.A., printed in *The Antiquary*, vol. xxi., 1890.

This was one of the badges of the de Stafford family, and was borne by Humphrey, Duke of Buckingham, who after assisting to raise Richard III. to the throne rebelled against him, and was by him beheaded at Salisbury in 1483. An interesting mention of the badge in connection with his son is found in Henry VIII.'s Jewel Book, of 1521. It occurs after Edward Bohun,

"Bounteous Buckingham,
The mirror of all courtesy,"

had perished on the scaffold—

"Item a chalis w^{t} a patent gilt w^{t} swannys stafford knottis and carte navis pcell of the plate that was late the Ducke of Buck the Kingis rebell. xxxix oz." *

31. One of a set of four: the legend almost entirely obliterated.

32. A fragment of one of the Malvern wall tiles. Date 1457-8. It presents within tabernacle work the letters I. H. C. and T. U. C.: each group of three crowned. The gothic letters stand for the Greek form of the name and title of the Redeemer, thus:

Ἰησοῦς χριστός θεοῦ Ὑιός Σωτήρ
Iesous Christos Theou Uios Soter
Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour.

The initials of the five words form the word ΙΧΘΥΣ (Ichthus). Emblematically, of course, the fish is significant of the letters ΙΧΘΥΣ. The favourite mystical symbol called the *Vesica Piscis* is constantly met with in mediæval decorations; indeed, it occurs on some of the Malvern tiles, but on no specimen at Monmouth.

33. A fragment. See No. 19.

34. Ditto. See No. 4 and compare it with No. 38 in the south corner of the west wall.

35. One of the Malvern wall tiles. It presents within tabernacle work an example of the "Shield of Salvation."

* Assoc. Soc. Reports, 1884, p. 156.

Above the shield are portions of the letters I. H. C. or I. H. S., and on either side of it are letters not easy to define. They may be intended for A (Ave) and M (Maria); if so the M is inverted, or, as seems to me more probable, they represent A (Alpha), and a badly drawn Ω (Omega). The emblems of the Passion in the shield are as follows: 1. The Cross. 2. The spear. 3. The ladder. 4. The scourge. 5. The rod with the sponge; and 6. The dice.

36. A fragment. See No. 5.

37. Ditto, shewing foliage.

38. A perfect tile: same as No. 4.

39. Same as No. 8.

40, and onwards to the west door are pieces of tiles already mentioned except one. It is next to the group of fragments by the door, and is one of a set of four. Its central ornament is a star of six points. The pattern is somewhat similar to No. 17 and No. 21, the chief difference being in the treatment of the branches of the floriated cross. The quarrel shows that the pattern was not deeply impressed—this is clearly seen in one point of the star—and appears to have been altogether a faulty specimen.

And here, where the door breaks the course, I discontinue mentioning each tile in strict numerical order, as many on the north-west and north walls are but duplicates of some that have been described.

Against the door (north side) the first is a border tile—the only one in the church—of early date, shewing a poor design of pierced bands.

Next to it is a fragment displaying a shield with some emblems of the Passion. They are intended for 1 (in the centre) the three nails. 2. Two swords debased. 3. The crown of thorns; and 4 (under the nails) either the hammer, the money-bag, the seamless coat, or a T (tau) cross. It is difficult to say what the fourth emblem was meant to represent, as its outline is not sharp; in fact, this fragment shows that the tile was of indifferent workmanship, and only by comparing a

sketch of it with specimens at Malvern —they are very low down near the floor—have the first and third emblems been named with any certainty.

The emblems of the Crucifixion or instruments of the Passion were continually used as ornaments in our old churches. They are found in glass : they appear carved in stone on fonts, on tombs and over doors –a modern example of a "Shield of Salvation" occurs at Arkesden, Essex—and carved in wood they are to be seen on poppies and on panels : they are "of constant occurrence in every part of a church, where the original decorations have been preserved."*

Still bearing to the right, and under the Roberts monument, is a fragment of a tile showing a pattern of roses, circles and two birds facing each other. A perfect one of the same design will be noticed later. Two tiles further on is the only one of a set of four bearing the Royal Arms and part (*Fiat v*) of the words *Fiat Voluntas Dei.* Its date is about 1425. It has been found at Tewkesbury Abbey, where the heraldic tiles are particularly interesting.

Between the Price and Parry monuments is a tile—one of a set of four—presenting two shields : I., charged with the arms of the Newburghs (*chequée or and az., a chevron erm.*), from whom the Earldom of Warwick passed by inheritance to the house of Beauchamp ; II., charged with the arms of Le Despencer —— *quar erly arg. and gu., in the second and third quarters a frette or, over all a bend sa.* They are the arms of Richard Beauchamp, K.G., Earl of Warwick (died in 1439), and his Countess, Isabella, daughter and heiress of Thomas le Despencer, Earl of Gloucester. Her mother was Constance, daughter of Edmund Plantagenet, Duke of York, and Isabel, the younger daughter, and co-heiress of Peter, King of Castile and Leon. Isabelle le Despencer first married Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Worcester and Lord of Abergavenny, by whom she had Elizabeth, their heir, wife of Sir Edward Neville, Knt , younger son of Ralph Neville, Earl of Westmorland, who was summoned to Parliament as Baron Abergavenny, 29th Hen. VI., and from whom the present Earls of Abergavenny and Westmorland are descended. Her second

* Parker's "Calendar of the Anglican Church."

husband was Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick (cousin-german to her former husband), by whom she had Henry, Duke of Warwick, who died without issue 11th June, 1445, and Ann, the wife of Richard Neville, Earl of Salisbury, who, in her right, was afterwards Earl of Warwick, and by her had issue two daughters, namely, Isabel, wife of George Plantagenet, Duke of Clarence; brother of Edward IV., and Ann, first married to Edward, Prince of Wales (son of Henry VI.), and secondly, to Richard, Duke of Gloucester, afterwards King Richard III.

Isabelle, Countess of Warwick, died in 1439, and was interred near the centre of the choir of Tewkesbury Abbey. Her grave was opened during the restoration of 1875, and having been inspected was reverently closed again and restored to its original condition. (See North's "Guide to Tewkesbury Abbey.")

Passing over three groups of fragments, the next is a whole tile, of which a broken specimen appears under the Price monument. The rich design successfully imitates damask, and the effect where any considerable space was covered must have been very beautiful.

Below the tablet to *Frances* Fortune occurs the solitary specimen of a fourteenth century tile, presenting one branch, diagonally placed, of a boldly designed floriated cross within part of a circle, and next to it is another perfect tile, of much later date. It is, if I mistake not, the only one of its kind in the collection, and has on it a large rose conventionally treated.

Some four or five tiles eastward of these two—that is to say, beneath *William* Fortune's tablet—is one, which from its being found here, is perhaps the most interesting of any in S. Mary's, for it displays the cognizance of a lady who once owned Monmouth castle, and who within the walls of that fortress gave birth to her eldest child—"I can tell you, there is goot men porn at Monmouth"—the child who, living to be King "won the Church by his orthodoxy, the nobles by his warlike prowess, the whole people by his revival of the glories of Créçy and Poictiers."* Yes, here is the badge of the de

* Green's "Short History of the English People."

Bohuns as borne by Henry V. in right of his mother—*a white swan with wings overt, collared and chained or.*

Lady Mary de Bohun was the great-grand-daughter of Edward I. and Eleanora of Castile, and the richest heiress in England, excepting her sister Alianore, who married Henry IV.'s uncle, Thomas of Woodstock, Duke of Gloucester. She had possessions to the amount of forty thousand nobles per annum, arising from several earldoms and baronies. She was the youngest daughter of Humphrey, Earl of Hereford, Essex and Northhampton, by Joan, daughter of Richard Fitz-Alen, Earl of Arundel. Her marriage with Henry, Earl of Derby, afterwards Henry IV., took place at Rocheford between July 27, 1380, and March 6, 1381, before she had attained the age of fourteen years.* After her marriage, she remained for a time in the guardianship of her mother. The Countess of Derby died in 1394, leaving six young children. She was buried within King's College, Leicester.† Though her decease happened some years before Henry IV.'s elevation to the royal dignity, he caused masses to be said for the repose of her soul, under the title of Queen Mary, by the monks of Sion Abbey, which he founded after he came to the throne of England. Froissart expressly declares she was skilled in Latin and cloister divinity.‡

The de Bohuns derived the swan as Earls of Essex from the Mandevilles or Magnavillas, whom they, through marriage, succeeded in the earldom.§ The Mandevilles appear to have been related to Adam Fitz-Swanne or Swanus (perhaps originally Sweyn or Swayn, a common Danish name), who was seised

* "Register of John of Guant," quoted by Hermentrude, refuting the story that Henry, by the help of the Countess of Arundel, carried off his wife from the custody of her brother-in-law at Plessy.—See "N. and Q.," 7th s. vi 73.

† Sandford's statement that Mary de Bohun was interred in Canterbury Cathedral is incorrect. The idea that she was buried there appears to have arisen from a confusion between the names of de Bohun and de Mohun, "iohenne de borwaschs (de Burghersh) ke feut dame de mohun," having been buried in the crypt in 1395.

‡ See Miss Strickland's "Lives of the Queens of England," vol. iii.

§ *Cf.* "Regal Heraldry," by Thomas Willement, p. 28.

of large estates in the North of England, *temp.* William the Conqueror.* It is very probable that this badge has had something to do with the abundance of the tavern sign of "The White Swan" in Essex†, and other parts of the country where the Mandevilles and the de Bohuns held large estates.

There is one thing besides its historic interest which enhances the value of the de Bohun tile at Monmouth. It is a better specimen of its kind than the one on the north side of the segmental wall at Malvern Priory. Here the device is clear, there it is much worn.‡

Two tiles from the badge of the white swan is a splendid tile with an escutcheon displaying *gu., a fessse between six crosslets or*, the arms of Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick. It is one of a set of four of the same design. The spaces outside the shield are filled with graceful foliage.

Again, to eastward is a whole tile similar to No. 30 on the south wall. It received an accidental dent in the centre of the nave of the wheel before the glaze was applied, and consequently into the cavity thus formed the glaze has run freely. It is of a rich golden colour. Whilst examining this tile it may be as well to compare the glaze with that on No. 13, and also on one with the pattern of a crowned M on the north wall.

Below the Amphlett monument is the best specimen of the tile, in one corner of which appear two birds. It formed one of a set of four. The design of two birds, one on each side of an ornamental device, is repeatedly found on mediæval tiles. It occurs on specimens from Old Cleve (Somerset), Toller Hill (Sussex), Droitwich, Tewkesbury, St. Davids, Bakewell, &c. At the last named place border tiles were made with figures of birds very gracefully introduced into the pattern.§ At Tewkesbury the birds on the "Te Deo Gracias" tiles, for instance, are, as is often the case elsewhere, treated in a most conventional

* "N. and Q.," 7th s. i. 55.

† *Vide* "The Trade Signs of Essex," by Miller Christy, 1887.

‡ A tile bearing the de Bohun badge is figured in "The Uses and Teachings of Ancient Encaustic Tiles," by Frank Renaud, M.D., reprinted from "Transactions of the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society," R. Gill, Manchester, 1892.

§ See the illustrations in "The Reliquary," vol. viii. pp. 130-40.

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manner—they would perplex an ornithologist to say to what species they belong—but, as a rule, they are intended to represent doves. Their exact meaning I do not attempt to decide. They may refer to the Purification—the Virgin at her purification is represented with a pair of turtle-doves—or, as symbolised by similar figures in the Catacombs, they may be emblematical of regeneration in baptism, and in that case the origin of the design can be traced back to Rome, but, for my own part, I think it quite as likely that the device was taken from symbols found on Druidical remains in England, and that the two birds owe their origin to the two cockatrices facing each other, which in arkite mysteries were emblems of the One Supreme Being.

The most casual observer cannot fail to notice that the relics of the ancient flooring belong to two periods; the one displaying elaborate designs most skilfully executed; the other, and older, showing rougher workmanship and simpler devices. The men who fashioned these tiles are dust, but their work remains to prove that they were no mean artists, and that with loving intention they did their very best to assist in making the shrines in our island home beautiful offerings to God. Handsome as are the fifteenth century tiles, I am doubtful whether the earlier ones are not, locally at all events, the most interesting, because it is possible that on them may have knelt, rendering thanks for safe return from the wars in France, some Fluellen, some one or more of the "happy few" who won laurels on the field of Agincourt under the banner of Harry of Monmouth.

Once again a jewelled light
  Falls on the pavement old;
Once again the fragments quaint
  Shine in the rays of gold.
Placed anew in God's own House,
  They tell of days of yore;
Monmouth, guard them—that your sons
  May hold them—evermore.